

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-32 are currently pending. Claims 31 and 32 have been amended by the present amendment. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 31 and 32 were objected to as containing informalities; Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 22-26, and 29-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niitsuma et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2001/0050782 A1, hereinafter “the ‘782 publication”) in view of Kuwahara (U.S. Patent 6,603,579 B1, hereinafter “the ‘579 patent”); Claims 2-4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘782 publication in view of the ‘579 patent and Kaneko et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0044298 A1, hereinafter “the ‘298 publication”); Claims 9 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘782 publication in view of the ‘579 patent and Suzue (U.S. Patent 6,618,166 B1, hereinafter “the ‘166 patent”); Claims 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘782 publication in view of the ‘579 patent, the ‘166 patent, and Toda (U.S. Patent 6,256,107 B1, hereinafter “the ‘107 patent”); Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘782 publication in view of the ‘579 patent, Yoshida (U.S. Patent 6,931,432 B1, hereinafter “the ‘432 patent”) and Huttenlocher et al. (U.S. Patent 6,011,905, hereinafter “the ‘905 patent”); Claims 15-17, 19-21, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘782 publication in view of the ‘579 patent and the ‘107 patent; and Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being

unpatentable over the '782 publication in view of the '579 patent, the '107 patent, the '432 patent, and the '905 patent.

Regarding the objection to Claims 31 and 32, Applicants have amended those claims as suggested by the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the amendment be entered to place the application in better condition for appeal. Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to Claims 31 and 32 have been overcome.

Claim 1 is directed to an image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus including, *inter alia*, (1) a format information acquisition part configured to acquire format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part; (2) a format determination part configured to determine a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the acquired format information; and (3) an image data conversion part configured to perform format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data. The format information includes information on whether a format of image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus and information on a compression rate of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the connected apparatus.

Turning to the applied art, the '782 publication is directed to an image forming system that conducts arbitrary image processing on data obtained by reading a document image. The outstanding Office Action concedes that the '782 publication does not teach or suggest information on a compression rate of image data for a format conversion to be performed by

a connected apparatus, as recited in Claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the '782 publication does not teach or suggest the format information acquisition part recited in Claim 1.

To remedy this deficiency, the outstanding Office Action relies on the '579 patent. The '579 patent is directed to a facsimile machine that stores image data in an image memory and then transmits that data to a remote party. The '579 facsimile machine dials the remote party and receives from it a transmission procedure signal that carries data indicating an encoding scheme of the remote party. The '579 facsimile machine then selects an encoding scheme to match the encoding scheme indicated by that data. In particular, the '579 facsimile machine employs the most efficient encoding method with the highest compression rate shared by the two parties.

At column 7, lines 19-36, the '579 patent discloses that it is determined whether the remote party is set to a higher level of encoding scheme than the facsimile machine. If the '579 remote party has a superior encoding scheme, the facsimile machine changes to the highest encoding scheme employable by both the remote party and facsimile machine. That is, the '579 patent merely discloses that the *facsimile machine* converts a file to a format supported by the remote party. The '579 patent does not disclose that the *remote party* performs a format conversion. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the '579 patent does not teach or suggest that a remote party transmits information on a compression rate of image data for a format conversion to be performed by a connected apparatus, as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that the '579 patent does not teach or suggest the format information acquisition part recited in Claim 1.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the ‘782 publication and the ‘579 patent, taken alone or in proper combination, fail to teach or suggest information on a compression rate of image data for a format conversion to be performed by a connected apparatus, as recited in Claim 1. Thus, Applicants further submit that no proper combination of the ‘782 publication and the ‘579 patent teaches or suggests the format information acquisition part recited in Claim 1.

Moreover, because no proper combination of the ‘782 publication and the ‘579 patent teaches or suggests information on a compression rate of image data for a format conversion to be performed by a connected apparatus, Applicants respectfully submit that no proper combination of the ‘782 publication and the ‘579 patent teaches or suggests the format information generation part recited in Claim 23, the acquiring step recited in Claim 26, or the generating step recited in Claim 30. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 23, 26, and 30 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably distinguish over any proper combination of the ‘782 publication and the ‘579 patent.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of the dependent claims over various combinations of the ‘782 patent and the ‘579 publication with the ‘298 publication, the ‘166 patent, the ‘432 patent, the ‘905 patent, and the ‘107 patent are moot.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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